



The Lakeshore Pet Alliance

Members:

Christine's Critter
Cafe and Rescue

Faithful to Felines

Golden Years
Alaskan Malamute
Rescue

Heaven Can Wait

The Humane
Society of the
United States

Humane Society &
Animal Rescue of
Muskegon County

Noah Project

Pay It Forward
Outreach

Pound Buddies

Timeless Pets

West Michigan
Spay & Neuter
Clinic

Wolf Song
Enterprises, LLC

Testimony:

Committee:

Date:

On behalf of:

Supporting SB 356, 357, and 358

House Judiciary

January 26, 2012

Our members and volunteers

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

The Lakeshore Pet Alliance is a coalition of Muskegon County animal shelters and animal rescue organizations that formed in 2009 to create an environment for its members to share ideas, information, and resources. Our goal is to enable our members and volunteers to save more animal lives and to make Muskegon County a safe and humane place for animals and people.

One of our primary objectives is to create a strong working relationship with Muskegon County law enforcement officials in order to combat animal cruelty and neglect. We have seen firsthand the effect of animal fighting on Muskegon County; scarred and wounded dogs are abandoned on our streets, or end up in our overcrowded shelters to face an uncertain fate. And because animal fighting does not occur in a vacuum, our already-overworked and underfunded law enforcement officers must contend with the presence of crimes that accompany this violent blood sport, including drug sales and use, weapons possession, and illegal gambling. It is truly a blight on our neighborhoods and a very real and present danger to the good citizens of our community.

The Lakeshore Pet Alliance believes that SB 356, 357, and 358 would help deter the criminal activity of animal fighting by creating penalties that offset any financial gains to be made from operating such an enterprise. We contend that animal fighting crimes can certainly be defined as organized crime networks and should be subject to racketeering penalties; their cruel and bloody spectacles are staged and carefully coordinated, their organizers are fully aware of the legal prohibitions against animal fights and therefore make all possible provisions to prevent detection, and large sums of money are made in the organization of the fights, their registration and attendance fees, the gambling on the participants, and the sale of animals involved in the enterprise.

Muskegon County, and indeed, all of Michigan, wants nothing more than to purge the bloody practice of animal fighting from our state. The Lakeshore Pet Alliance therefore asks you to pass SB 356, 357, and 358 to provide our state's law enforcement officials with more tools to do so. On behalf of all our members and volunteers, thank you so much for your time.

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